THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

"Verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called, but few of them are chosen." DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 95 : 5.

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A SOLID FOUNDATION*

DR. JOHN A. WIDTSOE

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

AS I STAND BEFORE YOU TO-DAY, my mind is concerned with the thought that though we live in a most marvelous age—in some respects the most remarkable age in the whole history of the world—in a day of mighty intellectual and material conquests, in an age of ages, in this foremost day of the history of human achievement, there is more contention among men than has been known before. Within the last few months, men of thought, earnest workers in behalf of the cause of mankind, have taken sides against each other, and those who have followed the events of the day have been led to feel that there is confusion upon the face of the earth, when, in fact, the great gifts that God has given His children in these latter days should bring clearness of vision and a new understanding of things. Instead, confusion seems to reign to-day as never before.

CHANGING THEORIES

Just the other day, the papers gave an account of the recent meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in which many notable scientists participated. Great Britain is one of the foremost nations in science. She helped lay the foundation of modern scientific thought, and she has fostered science, in a systematic, orderly way. The president of the British Association dedicated his address to the structure of the earth. He reminded us that a generation ago men were taught

*Address delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, Sunday, September 13th, 1925.

and believed that the interior of the earth was made up of molten matter, that whenever a crack occurred in the earth's crust, this molten matter was released, hence volcanoes.

This, he said, was all wrong. There is no such thing as an earth with a molten interior. He marshalled proofs, one after the other, to show that the earth is not molten inside, but is a solid mass, more solid inside than outside—that the core of the earth is the hardest and densest. That is, he proposed a complete change of view with regard to the constitution of the earth upon which we live. The report appeared in the newspapers; but nobody paid much attention to it. It seemed to be a minor matter. The earth is either molten or solid on the inside. Men do not contend over things of that kind. They say: "Well and good, so we thought yesterday; to-day we know better; to-morrow we may change again, because we may have a larger knowledge." So it is with many other minor considerations of life.

TO A GREATER KNOWLEDGE

We were taught thirty or forty years ago certain laws of nutrition. To-day, those laws have been changed, but there is not, therefore, confusion among the masses of mankind. The conceptions of astronomy have changed greatly within the last fifty or seventy-five years, but there has been no world upheaval in human thought because of it, for men recognise that we grow little by little into a greater knowledge of truth.

It is with respect to the larger things that our confusion exists; especially concerning the conceptions that lie at the foundation of all human conduct, faith and aspirations. Upon the question of the nature of the Almighty Father, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, men do not agree. Science may point in one way or another, but men do not see alike about the conclusions to be drawn. Concerning the nature of man and his origin there is about as much confusion, in this enlightened age, as there was hundreds of years ago. When we discuss the purpose of life—why man is upon the earth—there is confusion as to the answer. Men do not agree. The great conquests of man, through the use of his mind—science and modern thought—have done very little to bring about harmonious views as to the nature of God and man, and the destiny of man.

DARKNESS OF CONFUSION

Let me call your attention to the fact, realised by all, that there is no blackness like that of the confused mind. The darkness of the night is as bright light, compared with the mind that lives in confusion of understanding! So with the mind that is unable to understand clearly the truths pertaining to the origin, the existence and the destiny of human beings. The many diffi-

culties that have been discussed in the press the last few months, if read intelligently, will be seen to center about a few fundamental thoughts.

The great majority of us feel that we have received little help from man's own discoveries, in settling the simple fundamental considerations that are so necessary for our happiness. We can not walk in confusion and be satisfied. All this in spite of the fact that the great endeavour of man in the building of science and modern thought has been to bring order out of confusion, light out of darkness, and to enable man to walk in the light so that he can see every step he takes and know where he is going.

The mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, of "Mormonism" so-called, is to clarify the minds of men with respect to these ultimate fundamental conceptions relative to the Lord, to man, his purpose on earth, and his destiny hereafter.

CLEARNESS OF VISION

That is our prime mission. Those who understand these things and use their knowledge will find it easy in life to bring their lives into harmony with that which brings happiness to humanity. The history of "Mormonism" emphasises this thought. The Prophet Joseph Smith says, in his own story, that as a lad he heard the various sects clamouring for the right of preeminence. One said to him: "We are right, come and join us", another said the same, and he became confused. His visit into the sacred grove, in which he saw the Father and the Son, was in search of clearness of vision, of an understanding of the fundamental things of which I have spoken. The events of history for a thousand years before the Prophet Joseph Smith point to the conclusion that the world was in confusion and darkness respecting the fundamentals of religion. Here and there a man arose saying: "I can not see clearly, I must have more light."

Thus they came, one after the other, the great reformers, until Martin Luther and his successors made reformation in religions thinking a world-wide affair. And this was preparatory for the work that the Prophet Joseph Smith was to establish, under the direction of his Father in Heaven.

Throughout the whole history of Christianity there have been and are now honest men, whose souls have searched for the larger truth, for the brighter light, for the greater clearness, in which to order their lives.

The question may be asked: "Did the Prophet Joseph Smith really bring clearness into the religious confusion of the world?" Those who knew him have testified that that was the beauty of his work. Brigham Young was a close associate of the Prophet. In his discourses there is tribute after tribute to the Prophet Joseph Smith. This is an example:

"When I first heard him preach, he brought heaven and earth

together. When I saw Joseph Smith he took heaven, figuratively speaking, and brought it down to earth, and he took the earth and brought it up, and opened up in plainness and simplicity the things of God, and that is the beauty of Joseph's mission." Such is the testimony of Brigham Young as to the great service the Prophet rendered him. He continues:

"What a delight it was to hear Brother Joseph talk upon the principles of eternity. He would bring them down to the capacity of a child and he would unite heaven and earth."

Truth has this peculiar quality, that if spoken simply and plainly it may be understood by a child, and Brigham Young knew exactly what he meant when he said that the Prophet Joseph Smith brought down the things of heaven to the capacity of the child. If truth can not be understood by the humble, by the unlearned and by those who have the simplicity of childhood, it is not truth, it is still warped and needs to be straightened out and made to harmonise with eternal truth.

The associates of the Prophet Joseph Smith unanimously bear the same testimony that he made things clear and simple, and the hosts who have embraced the Gospel in these latter days bear like witness.

CLEARLY COHERENT

What did the Prophet Joseph Smith teach with respect to the mooted questions of to-day, the questions that give so much difficulty and cause so much confusion in the world of to-day? He taught a system of principles, clearly coherent, making one great divine system of truth, which tells the story of man from the beginning to the end—both the beginning and the end being lost in the fathomless time beyond our full understanding—yet so far as we can see backward and forward, the story is clear to our understanding.

There is no greater confusion to-day than with respect to the doctrine of God. Two ministers of the Gospel called on me some time ago to discuss the religion that I profess. When my time came to ask them questions I said, "Have I understood you correctly: Do you believe in a God who personally, completely, all in all, fills the whole universe, every corner of it, is nowhere absent, yet who, complete in all His perfection and completeness, dwells in each individual heart?" These men said: "That is the kind of God in which we believe." I only made one comment, "Gentlemen, if you believe in such a God, that is your concern. You have the right to believe in any God you choose. I can not understand such a god. To me he is incomprehensible."

A NEW UNDERSTANDING

Joseph Smith brought, through the grace of God, a new under-

standing of God. He declared that the Lord is a person, for he saw Him; he heard His voice; he spoke with Him. The Lord is a personage who can be approached, who can be understood, in whose image we are made. He assured Joseph that there is a spark of divinity in every one of His children, which, properly nurtured, may lead man to tremendous heights of understanding and power. This doctrine alone if accepted by the world at large would clear away many of the mists of obscurity and confusion which trouble men to-day.

I am inclined to believe that the beginning of our intellectual troubles, of our misunderstandings, may be traced back to a false, improper and insufficient conception of the Almighty Father. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared further that the Lord gave him authority and properly commissioned him to do His work. Man does not work single handed; he does not walk alone upon the face of the earth; but if he will, he may have God's authority to act for the Master, to help do the work that the Lord has ordained for this world. Man may labour in partnership with the Lord.

The Prophet Joseph Smith left through the inspiration of Almighty God the heritage of another thought to the generations to follow after him. He taught that man is the child of God, a literal son of God, begotten by God in the ages before this earth was.

CONFUSION CLEARED AWAY

In the spirit world the human race were begotten sons and daughters of the Lord.

Man is not an afterthought, created when the earth was finished. How that clears away the confusion of thought that clutters the theological and religious discussions of the day. So man lived before he came on this earth! That colours the whole story of human life. It is not likely, then, that he came up by slow degrees on this earth, into his present high estate; but he, a son of God, was placed upon the earth in accordance with the purposes of the Almighty to do certain work.

Thus is presented the doctrine of preexistence, taught clearly by Joseph Smith. It is a curious observation that the churches of the world, throughout these many years, have overlooked the doctrine of preexistence. It is not a new doctrine. It was not revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith as if it had never been on earth before. Adam was taught the Gospel, including the doctrine of preexistence, but man had forgotten it. Nevertheless, in the minds of men, throughout the ages there had run the feeling that man certainly lived before he came on earth. It is a doctrine of tremendous import, which can help clear away many of the mists of confusion that trouble mankind to-day.

STATED BY THINKERS

The doctrine of preexistence is stated now and again by the thinkers during the course of human history. The Greek philosophers, who did much to help mankind, thought and wrote about preexistence. Three hundred years ago several English poets, Vaughan and Traherne and others, sang of the time when they lived in the heavens above before the earth came into being, and they spoke of the time when they left those blessed abodes and came to this earth to do their earthly work.

We are all familiar with the words of Wordsworth, who in his Intimations of Immortality, speaks of his memories of the past, of his belief that man lived before he came on this earth. A man who attempts to use the facts and findings of this modern day, in interpreting man's existence, without understanding that man is an eternal being who lived before he came on earth, is sure to trip and to fall and will fail to explain fully because he is not building on the right foundation.

A further doctrine, left by the prophet, brings clearness instead of confusion into human minds. He explained that man may communicate with his Father in Heaven and that He communicates His will to His children.

CONTINUOUS REVELATION

The Father came down and showed Himself to the Prophet Joseph. When it was necessary, later on, He communicated with that same boy by sending the Angel Moroni and other similiar beings. The prophet learned that, by prayer, by giving oneself completely to God in prayer, by placing one's heart before the Lord, by telling the Lord definitely and clearly what is desired, close communication with the Lord may be established. In fact, this Church is based upon the doctrine of continuous revelation. The Lord is with us, is near us, and He hears us. The children of men have the right to know the will of the Lord with respect to their needs; and every individual in this Church, however humble, living a righteous life, having need of assistance from the Almighty, may obtain such help as may be needed for his own comfort and guidance.

We believe in revelation. One of the most beautiful features of the history of the Prophet Joseph Smith is his continual reiteration of the fact that when something was necessary to be known, when something was not clear to him, he inquired of the Lord and the needed revelation was obtained. We should walk through life in just that way, relying upon the existence of our Father in Heaven and upon our power to communicate with Him knowing His willingness to help us whenever we need His help—and we need it all the time. We should feel His nearness, and live as if we were in the presence of our Father.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE

After an interesting program on "The Book of Mormon", presented at the morning session of the Fall Conference held in Bristol on November 29th, Mission President James E. Talmage urged all members of the Church to lend their copies of this sacred volume of Scripture to their neighbours and friends that they too may become acquainted with its inspired teachings.

President Ianthus L. Richards, whose honourable release from further service in the British Mission was announced, expressed the joy that had come to him through service in the mission field. He said that as in times past so in this dispensation the Lord selected one of humble birth, the Prophet Joseph Smith, to deliver His word to the nations. Elder LeRoy E. Peterson, who was appointed President of the Bristol Conference to succeed President Richards, showed that "Mormonism" is the marvelous work and the wonder spoken of by Isaiah before which the wisdom of wise men would perish and the understanding of prudent men be hid.

President Talmage stated that unless men and nations hearken unto the words of the Lord and turn from their sins the earth will be stricken with wars and afflictions such as have never been before. The Mission President in his principal address decried the foolishness of men when they will believe only that which can be proved scientifically. He said there are many things that can not be understood by the finite mind of man; but of this we can be sure—that faith, repentance, baptism, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost are necessary to gain citizenship in the Kingdom of God.

The following Missionary Elders also spoke during the conference: John C. Hooper, Harvey P. Foster, Lee W. Lund, Howard Judd, all of the Bristol Conference, and President Peter J. Clarke of the Welsh Conference. They commented on the simplicity of the ordinances of the Gospel and the means whereby a testimony of the divinity of Christ may be gained. Musical numbers were given by Sisters Elsie Bryant, Edith Bryant and Dora Wintle and Elders Carl E. Brown and LeRoy E. Peterson.

Harvey P. Foster, Conference Clerk

The purposes of the Almighty are unchanged and unchangeable. His laws endure, and He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. His purposes will ripen and be consummated and His designs completed. Therefore, if we do not conform to His will, obey His laws and yield to His requirements in this world, we will be consigned to the "prison house", where we will remain until we pay the debt to the uttermost farthing.—President Joseph F. Smith in *Gospel Doctrine.*

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1925

EDITORIAL

PRIZES

It has ever been the custom of men, acting singly as individuals, or collectively as cities or nations, to bestow upon the most distinguished of their number tokens of merit for exceptional achievement. Upon the head of the winner in the Grecian games was placed the cherished victor's wreath and all Athens did him honour. In the days of chivalry the knight who was successful in the tournament knelt before the "Queen of Love and Beauty" while she placed the well earned chaplet upon his bared head. Not only among the civilised peoples of the earth but also among the less highly developed races has this custom been instituted and perpetuated.

In modern times this inborn tendency of human beings to acknowledge superior merit has assumed a multiplicity of forms. The spirit of the ancient Greeks has been revived in our sports. Prizes of material things and also of social distinction are offered to the swiftest runner, the best swimmer and the highest jumper. Schools have partaken of the same influence and pay large salaries to expert coaches who train the students to excel in athletic contests. Football and cricket teams are competing with one another for superiority. Those who best uphold the honour of the schools are given awards as expressions of appreciation for the commendable work done. Professional sports have been developed to a high degree and cities and towns now vie for honours. Loving cups, banners or medals are given to the winners as marks of distinction and, to most minds, the contest would be incomplete if this feature were omitted.

As in athletic contests so in educational activities—prizes of books are awarded to the most efficient students; scholarships and fellowships often amounting to hundreds of pounds a year are offered as incentives for thorough and dilligent study.

All this is done for the purpose of encouraging more strenuous effort. The object is worthy and the effect is apparent and usually good. The hope of reward inspires active and sedulous endeavour without which men can not progress. Such rewards should be sought after and when obtained should be valued highly.

But in seeking these temporal guerdons men should not forget that there are spiritual prizes of even greater value that God has

placed within the reach of every man. In writing to the Philippians Paul said: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" and further tells the Romans that God "will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." In seeking spiritual prizes we should remember that "there is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."—Junius S. Romney.

WORK FOR ALL

President Hugh J. Cannon

In charge of the Swiss-German Mission

Speaking in the name of the most high, the prophet Isaiah says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Perhaps in no particular does the Church of Jesus Christ differ from man-made systems more than in the opportunities afforded for active service. In many churches, the work is done by a comparative few. A wide gap stands between clergy and laity. He who has not studied for the ministry is supposed to leave questions of religion to him who has.

Such practice can have but one result: Man thinks but little about the things at which he does not work. An inactive laity, therefore, means a laity lacking in thoughtfulness on religious subjects. A person who possesses a naturally contemplative mind, but with no opportunity for activity, who dares enter the forbidden field of thought, has no encouragement to think along constructive lines, and therefore usually becomes critical and out of harmony with his church, and the one duty imposed upon him—that of attendance at divine worship—is neglected.

The belief, formerly so prevalent in the world, that in heaven the redeemed would sit at their Redeemer's feet and sing psalms throughout eternity, fails to satisfy the active and progress-loving mind. Of course all churches teach commendable moral principles; but can a religion which requires nothing more here than attendance at church as a listener prepare its members for anything better than to sit as silent and inactive worshipers hereafter? No one expects to learn to swim by standing on the river's bank and receiving oral instructions or to become an

artist by walking through a picture gallery and being shown the wonderful paintings.

In every line of human endeavour except religion, which is of paramount importance, men are urged to carve out their own future. In the field of science, of business, of politics, only he succeeds who studies and thinks and works. One might refer, for example, to most political organisations where the leaders, often self-appointed, do the work and consequently the thinking for the masses. They reap the benefits. Man is not a highly original creature, and in this one particular there is little difference between a humanly created church and a political party organised by the same agency.

But how different it is in the Church of Christ. Here, to study and think is a solemn duty. "Man can be saved no faster than he gains knowledge." The Church provides work for every intelligent member. At the same time the Lord's method is such as to discourage the self-seeker and him who is ambitious to rule, in any capacity, over his fellows. He who can properly preside in Christ's Church must have learned patience and that the office must seek him; he must not seek the office.

Think of the multitudinous opportunities for work. First comes the home, greatest of all institutions except the Church itself. Latter-day Saints are encouraged to establish homes where love and a goodly number of children abound. Here the Gospel is discussed. The Scriptures, containing the most effective teachings ever given to man, are studied. Family and secret prayer is taught and practiced, and members from such homes are not embarrassed when asked to pray either in public or in private; and in any society they can give an intelligent reason for the hope that is within them.

In organised stakes and wards of the Church, boys of tender years are ordained deacons and, as they manifest worthiness, are advanced through the various grades of the Priesthood, each grade with its well-defined duties. The class periods provided for each quorum give members the opportunity to participate in the discussion. Every Sabbath, in all wards in Zion, from six to ten prayers are offered, including the blessing on the Sacrament. This activity, as well as teaching in the Sunday Schools and delivering discourses in the meetings, is done by the laity, if there be any such thing as laity in the Church.

Boys and men are selected to act as Ward Teachers. Their duty is to visit each month the home of every member and see that iniquity does not exist. They learn that to properly teach they must properly prepare. This naturally inspires them to righteous living.

As members, teachers and officers of the Mutual Improvement Associations, many boys and men, some even of advanced years, find a pleasant and profitable field for activity. That they do

not participate merely as listeners may properly be emphasised. Their participation is active, resulting in growth to themselves and others.

Nor are men alone given the opportunity of labouring in the Church. Relief Societies and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations are purely women's organisations, created for the development of self and helpfulness to others. Primary Associations and Religion Classes, in which children are taught gospel truths during the week, have women as officers and teachers. Women, too, find splendid opportunities, both to study and to teach, in the Sunday Schools.

In the Missions similar opportunities for work are furnished Church members, though of course it is not possible with the ever-changing conditions to have as comprehensive an organisation as can be had in Zion.

The missionary work itself, in addition to its educational value, is perhaps the best means yet known of developing activity. Young men and women who spend several years in the mission field, giving their entire time to the Lord's work, have laid a foundation upon which an enduring structure can be reared. But it is not necessary to be called to a foreign mission in order to do such work. Everywhere in this wide world opportunities for preaching the Gospel abound.

Whether in this Church or elsewhere, the notion that a man must be called to a presiding position to be active in religious matters is not inspired by the Lord. Along lines here indicated, and in others which space does not permit us to mention, the humble member who holds no special position but who desires to do good can find a field for his best efforts.

The absolute necessity for activity requires no argument. One need but look around to discover how quickly a Church member withers and dies spiritually when he ceases to work.

The question may properly be asked: What has the Church to show for the activity developed in its membership?

With no spirit of boastfulness we may say that its members have a faith, yea, a positive assurance, that they are right, which is not equaled by any other people in the world. Rare indeed are the cases where men and women have been induced by argument or persuasion to leave the Church. Practically every case of apostasy is attributed to wrong-doing. But the active member is prayerful and prayer prevents sin. Then, too, such people feel that their lives must square with their teachings. Consequently as the percentage of active members increases the percentage of sinful members decreases.

The writer of these lines was associated in Utah with a Stake where the practice prevailed of calling young boys and girls to speak in ward and other conferences. In less than two years, more than three hundred were thus called, in most cases without

previous notice being given them. Though they ranged in age from fourteen to twenty years, in no single case was there a refusal to come to the pulpit and respond to the call. True, the remarks in most instances were brief, as they were expected to be, but they were very effective. The words of one trembling boy about fifteen years old will never be forgotten by at least one of his hearers.

He said in substance: "I know that Joseph Smith was a prophet of the Almighty and that his teachings are divine. I can not tell just how I know it, but I feel it all through me." Needless to say this testimony was not the result of idleness. Where except in the Church of Christ can such a thing be duplicated?

The assumption that only those of age and experience can work in the Lord's vineyard is not justified by past history as it has come to us through the holy Scriptures. Neither is it justified by present experience. Though the writer has been interested in "ward teaching" for more than three decades, has had many splendid men come to his home and has himself gone out with capable and earnest workers, the most effective teaching he has ever seen was done by two fifteen-year-old boys whom he had the privilege of accompanying for the purpose of observing their methods. Their youthfulness and humility more than compensated for lack of experience. The Spirit of the Lord accompanied them; they presented the subject of the evening in a remarkably convincing manner, and the hearts of their hearers were deeply touched.

"Blessed is he who has found his work."

LATTER-DAY SAINT HYMNS*

"Come, Come Ye Saints"

In our last lesson we considered a hymn written for a special occasion. In that instance the author called the attention of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the fact that he had written a hymn, and submitted it for his consideration. The hymn we present for this lesson was brought into being at the request of the second great prophet of the Church, Brigham Young.

Scarcely was President Young appointed head of the Church, before he was called to lead the people across the plains into the desert country of Western America. Not half has ever been told of the hardship of that march. A few years ago Judge Terrell, of Austin, Texas, United States Minister to Turkey during President Grover Cleveland's administration, visited the Temple Block and asked the guide to permit him to speak to the party being

*This article is for use in the course of study of the Mutual Improvement Associations on the last meeting night in December.

conducted through the grounds. Permission was granted him and he said: "Ladies and Gentlemen, I was a youth of nineteen when your people left the city of Nauvoo. I stood on the banks of the river and saw them cross to what I believed to be certain death. A poorer, more bedraggled set of people I have never seen. They started with horses and cows hitched to the same wagon. What I witness on this Block to-day is a veritable miracle to me."

Under such circumstances one can readily imagine that the inconveniences of the journey would prove a sore trial, and that there would be times when human nature would well nigh break under the pressure and greatly need the stimulation of skilled leadership coupled with the direct blessings of Almighty God.

At Locust Creek, Iowa, President Brigham Young, feeling great anxiety because there were murmurings in the camp, called Elder William Clayton aside and said: "Brother Clayton, I want you to write a hymn that the people can sing at the camp-fires, in the evening; something that will give them sneeor and support, and help them to forget the many troubles and trials of the journey."

Elder Clayton withdrew from the camp and in two hours returned with the hymn familiarly known as "Come, Come, Ye Saints." His personal testimony is to the effect that the Spirit of the Lord rested upon him during the time of its composition, and that the hymn was written under the power and inspiration of the Lord.

That it admirably served the purpose for which it was written is abundantly testified to by hundreds of people who drew from it comfort and support as they made their memorable journey to the Valleys of the Mountains.

The first stanza reads:

Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labour fear,
But with joy wend your way;
Though hard to you this journey may appear,
Grace shall be as your day.
'Tis better far for us to strive
Our useless cares from us to drive:
Do this, and joy your hearts will swell—
All is well! all is well!

The first line is a veritable bugle call for eonrage, and the second asks that they go on their way rejoicing, no matter what the odds. In the third and fourth lines the anthor admits that the journey will undonbtedly be hard for most of them; but along with that admission is the promise that the grace of God will attend and support them snfficiently.

'Tis better far for us to strive our useless cares from us to drive—These two lines intimate that trifles are fretting them. They

are reminded that such things are useless, and destroy one's power to do better things. Possibly the lines carry a slight reproof, but if so, it is tactfully concealed between promises of joy and support, and the assurance that all will be well.

Turning to the first two lines of the second stanza—*Why should we mourn, or think our lot is hard? 'Tis not so; all is right!*—it is evident that Elder Clayton is calling upon the Saints to look upon the whole matter from a spiritual point of view, and not from the human standpoint, lest they faint by the way. Nothing is more firmly established in the religious life than that the Spirit of the Lord can heighten and relieve any situation, no matter how forbidding.

Then comes a challenge, issued through a question—*Why should we think to earn a great reward, if we now shun the fight?* We are inclined to call this the gem thought of the hymn; at all events, it is the thought that we may carry over into our lives, and which is as applicable to the life of to-day as it was to the lives of those for whom it was written. It is a nugget of wisdom.

And then come the lines:

Gird up your loins, fresh courage take;
Our God will never us forsake;
And soon we'll have this tale to tell—
All is well! all is well!

Again the bugle call for courage, and the promise that all is well!

The third stanza reads as follows:

We'll find the place which God for us prepared,
Far away in the West;
Where none shall come to hurt, nor make afraid;
There the Saints will be blessed.
We'll make the air with music ring—
Shout praises to our God and King:
Above the rest these words we'll tell—
All is well! all is well!

The central thought of this stanza is that the Saints are to find a home in the West where peace will be their portion. Yet no one knew just where that home would be when the words were written. No other thought could be a substitute for that thought. It is the promised reward of their courage and faith. These people had been driven from their homes; what they desired above all else was an abiding place. If a man is hungry, he wants food; if thirsty, drink; and if homeless, a home. The poet reminds them of the prophecy uttered by Joseph the Prophet, in 1842, that the Saints would become a mighty people in the Rocky Mountains.

The fourth and last stanza embodies the essence of the spirit of the pioneers:

And should we die before our journey's through,
Happy day! all is well!
We then are free from toil and sorrow too;
With the just we shall dwell.
But if our lives are spared again,
To see the Saints their rest obtain,
O, how we'll make this chorus swell—
All is well! all is well!

The force of the first four lines of this stanza is not to be impressed through any wordy discussion. The most eloquent tribute that may be paid to them comes from such recitals as the one President Heber J. Grant gave us the benefit of, in a recent conference. For this reason we insert this wonderful life story.

"I remember", said President Grant, "that upon one occasion my father-in-law—the late Oscar Winters—said, 'Heber, I believe that the young people of Zion do not thoroughly appreciate what Brother Clayton's hymn meant to us as we sang it night after night, crossing the plains; and I believe that choir leaders do not appreciate it, or they would not stop after singing three verses.'

"Brother Winters further said, 'I want to tell you an incident that happened as I was coming to the Valley. One of our company was delayed in coming to camp; we got some volunteers, and were about to go back and see if anything had happened—if he had had trouble with the Indians, or what was the matter—when we saw him coming in the distance. When he arrived we unyoked his cattle and helped him to get his supper. He had been quite sick and had to lie down by the road a time or two. After supper he sat down on a large rock, by the camp fire, and sang the hymn, "Come, Come, Ye Saints." It was the rule in the camp that whenever anybody started to sing that hymn we would all sing it; but for some reason no one joined with this brother. His voice was quite weak and feeble, and when he had finished I glanced around and I don't believe there were any of the people sitting there whose eyes were tearless. He sang the hymn very beautifully, but with a weak and plaintive voice, and yet with the spirit and inspiration of the hymn. The next morning we discovered that he was not hitching up his oxen; we went to his wagon and found that he had died during the night! We dug a shallow grave and laid his body in it. We then thought of the stone on which he had been sitting the night before when he sang the hymn . . . and rolled it over in place as a headstone for his grave'."

Surely it is small wonder that after listening to such a story as this that President Grant should have selected "Come, Come, Ye Saints" as his favorite hymn. Judge Terrell said: "The path of the Latter-day Saints was marked by foot-prints of blood,

and by silent graves from Nauvoo to the Valley of the Great Salt Lake. The marvel is that they did not all die. Those of us who saw them go forth into the wilderness believed that every one was marked for death"; but in accord with the Prophet's word they found the West; and in it, as one distinguished gentleman said, "They have carved an empire out of desolation."

In conclusion, we say that this hymn has no special rhetorical embellishment; but it has that which is above and beyond such; it has a record for having met the soul-hunger of a people who were making the most courageous effort, perhaps, ever made in the history of the world to establish themselves where they might worship God as conscience dictated. Nor is this its only merit; it has embalmed the past of a people whose growing youth can know little of the heroism of their fathers and mothers except as it is preserved to them through the pen of the historian and the medium of art, and this classic of the plains is one of the mediums through which the marvelous past of the Latter-day Saints is preserved.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Doings in the Conferences: *Birmingham*—On December 3rd in Handsworth a farewell social was held in honour of Elder George T. Harrison who has been appointed to the Leeds Conference. A baptismal service was held at Handsworth on December 5th; two candidates were baptised by Elder Melvin W. Grant and confirmed by President Milton England and Elder Robert M. Adams. The Relief Society and Sunday School of the Handsworth Branch held a bazaar on December 5th. On the same day a farewell social in honour of Elder Elwood G. Meadows, who has been honourably released, was held in the Handsworth Branch.

Liverpool—Conference of the Blackburn Branch was held on November 8th; the theme of the Sunday School session was "How the Latter-day Saints Differ from Other People"; the speakers were President Rulon W. Openshaw and Elders Rollo E. Watkins, Grant W. Wilde and Adrain V. Toolson.

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